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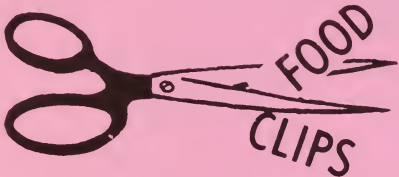
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Food and Home Notes

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In This Issue:

- 1 - In the Garden
...Bark Mulch
- 2 - On the Farm
- 3 - ...Family Finances
- 4 - For the Holidays
...Christmas trees

Process cheese food is milder in flavor, softer in texture, spreads more easily, and melts more quickly than regular process cheese. However — it does not add as much flavor to other foods as natural or process cheese.

* * *

Any surface mold that develops on hard natural cheese should be trimmed off completely before the cheese is used. (Of course, in mold-ripened cheese such as Blue and Roquefort, mold is an important part of the cheese and can be eaten.)

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Need to save cheese for awhile in the refrigerator? Dip the cut surface in paraffin — it will prevent it from drying out. Then store in a tightly covered container — or wrap in waxed paper or foil.

* * *

Any perishable food (cream pies, seafoods, and dishes made with eggs, fish, meat, and poultry) should be kept COLD (below 40F). Do NOT let these foods stand at room temperature more than two hours.

WHEN WINTER COMES

—PROTECT YOUR SOIL

Bark mulch is 100% organic and comes from the bark of a tree. Before a log is sawed and processed into lumber products, it passes through a debarker, which removes the bark. The bark is aged to give it the rich, dark, reddish-brown color. It's sorted into large chunks, nuggets and chips. Forest tree-bark mulch, now used extensively for landscaping around buildings and walkways, helps protect plants and their roots from alternate freezing and thawing through the winter months.

By using bark mulch you also help to improve texture of the soil by enriching it with natural humus, according to the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Bark mulch improves the drainage of heavy clay soils and the water holding capacity of sandy soils. It won't crust, blow away, or wash away under normal conditions. And — when summer comes again, it helps to smother weeds so you have less weeding and less hoeing. Bark mulch also reduces evaporation so you need to water less often. And — it usually lasts from 3 to 6 years.



ONE FAMILY'S BILL... HOW IT CHANGED IN 18 YEARS¹

Expenditures	Average dollars per family 1973	Percent of total expenditures ²	
		1955 ³	1973
Food	2,013	25.2	18.7
Food and nonalcoholic beverages at home	1,643	21.7	15.2
Food away from home	370	3.5	3.4
Housing	2,671	28.1	24.8
Shelter	1,247	10.7	11.6
House furnishings and equipment	696	8.9	6.5
Household operations	728	8.5	6.7
Clothing	647	13.0	6.0
Females, 16 years and over	221	4.3	2.1
Females, 2-15 years	64	1.3	.6
Males, 16 years and over	203	4.4	1.9
Males, 2-15 years	66	1.3	.6
Children under 2	11	.2	.1
Materials and services	82	1.5	.8
Transportation	3,109	11.4	28.8
Purchases, all motor vehicles	2,226	5.1	20.6
Maintenance and repairs, all motor vehicles	193	4.5 ⁴	1.8
Operating expenses, all motor vehicles	656		6.1
Other travel and transportation	34	.4	.3
Medical care	624	7.3	5.8
Personal care	211	2.1	2.0
Tobacco and alcoholic beverages	91	2.0	.8
Tobacco	18	1.6	.2
Alcoholic beverages	73	.5	.7
Subscriptions and memberships	48	1.4	.4
Education	160	.8	1.5
Miscellaneous	524	2.8	4.9
Personal insurance	321	2.6	3.0
Cash gifts and contributions	366	3.3	3.4

¹ Preliminary. Includes all family living expenses incurred in 1973, except income taxes.

² Percents may not add due to rounding.

³ 1955 data were restructured for greater comparability with 1973 expenditure groupings.

⁴ Includes operating expenses.

SURVEY REPORT ON —

FARM FAMILY EXPENSES.....1955 AND 1973

More than 2,600 farm families throughout the United States were personally interviewed for a Farm Family Living Survey in 1973, a year of unprecedented high farm income. This survey, conducted by USDA's Statistical Reporting Service (SRS), was the first one since 1955.

In the 1955 survey, transportation costs — purchase and maintenance of the family car*— claimed only 11 percent of all family living expenses. In the 1973 survey, 29 percent of total expenditures—roughly a fourth of the farm family's income before taxes — was spent on transportation.

Mortgages, rent, home furnishings, and general home repair stood second on the list in the new survey — housing swallowed up just a fifth of pretax income. Groceries, in second place in 1955, were third on the list of 1973 expenses, claiming 16 percent of gross farm income (excluding the value of food grown and eaten on the farm).

Fourth biggest living expense was clothes. But the share of total expenses went down more than half — from 13% of the total income to 6 percent. Medical services ranked fifth among major outlays — exactly in the same spot, as the earlier survey showed.

Farm family living expenses are one of the five major components that go into the parity index, one of USDA's most important indicators of farm well-being. It provides a way of determining if prices of farm products are keeping pace with prices paid by farmers for other commodities.

* usually includes business use too.

—ON BUYING AND CARING FOR YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE

Christmas trees first appeared in this country during the Revolutionary War. According to legend, Hessian Troops, homesick for their friends and families in Germany, gathered trees from American forest to help them celebrate the Christmas season.

Now it is reported that 60-odd million households in the United States use more than 45 million Christmas trees annually. About 40 million are grown and harvested in the United States — (the rest usually come from Canada). Tree farmers own about 70% of the Christmas tree plantations.

Leading Christmas tree species are Douglas-fir, Balsam-fir, Red Cedar, Black Spruce, Scotch Pine, and Red Pine.



When you go to buy your tree this Christmas, you'll want to get a good tree — whatever species you like — one that is fresh and will be appropriate for you.

USDA's Forest Service offers some tips to help you choose a tree that will be fresh and pretty throughout the holiday season. 1) Bend a needle on the tree. If it is resilient, the tree is fresh. 2) Bump the base of the tree hard on the ground. If the needles do not fall, the tree is fresh. (Spruce trees do not retain needles well, this does not necessarily reflect lack of freshness.) 3) Feel the bottom of the stump-- On the fresh trees it feels sappy, moist.

After you have selected your tree and finally have it home you may decide it's too early to "put it up". If so — be sure to place the tree in a bucket of water, in a cool shaded area.

Before you put the tree in the stand, cut about an inch or two off the trunk squarely at the base. This will allow the tree to take up water more readily. A tree stand filled with water will help prevent needles from dropping and increase the tree's resistance to fire. Using a bucket of wet sand will help keep it fresh also. Add a pint to a quart of water a day to the tree stand, being sure to keep the water level above the bottom of the trunk.

To further prevent fire, the tree should not be decorated with cotton or paper objects, wax candles or anything else that burns easily. Check lights for worn places in the wiring and be sure not to over-load circuits. Also be sure not to place the tree near a fireplace or other sources of heat.

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